

Questions and Answers from the ISTAR Administrator Webinars

Administration:

Q: My LC administrator said he gave me administrator rights but I don't have the administrator tabs in the Add/Find and on dashboard. What needs to be done?

A: *You will only have an administration tab on the LC dashboard if you are a Learning Connection Administrator or LC System Administrator. If you have ISTAR Administration access, you have the Add/Find option when you go into ISTAR. Please refer to "Most Common Roles for ISTAR" document in the Files and Bookmarks tab for more information.*

Q: Can the ISTAR administrator correct grade levels or is that done through our STN administrator?

A: *This is done through your STN administrator through Real Time. When a teacher creates a new assessment they can change the grade level of the assessment they will use, but this does not change the grade on the student list or in STN.*

Q: Is the administrator the case load manager or the TOR.

A: *Not unless the administrator is the person responsible for doing the assessment.*

Q: When ISTAR administrators check compliance, will a teacher show compliant if she has accidentally chosen ISTAR for progress monitoring?

A: *No, the only students who appear on the Compliance Report are those with an open or finalized assessment with the purpose of "ISTAR in lieu of ISTEP+" selected. This selection is made when the case manager creates the assessment.*

Q: I only have high school students listed. Do I ask my LC admin to import elementary and middle school students?

A: *No, this means that you do not have ISTAR administrator access to all the schools you need. When you open Add/Find, check the corporation you have access to and then check the schools you have access to. If any are missing, contact that local LC admin to give you access to what you are missing.*

Q: Did you say that data for AYP will be pulled for all 3rd - 10th graders?

A: *The data for AYP pulled will be for those students in grades 3-8 and 10 who have ISTAR in lieu of ISTEP+ selected for the purpose on the assessment. Only these student (and 9th graders) will be listed on your Compliance Report.*

Q: Will the Cognitive Functioning section only be accessible by the case manager?

A: *Yes, but what the case manager selects will be listed on your Compliance Report. If you find incorrect information on your Compliance report (i.e. incorrect grade, exceptionality, cognitive functioning), the case manager will need to either finish and finalized the assessment or delete it and then create a new one with the correct information and resave all assessment data before April 30th, 2011.*

Q: Can you show us again where administrators can view finished reports for our corporation to make sure we are compliant by 4-30-11.

A: Individual Summary reports can be viewed from the ISTAR reports option. You can also view the finalized Summary report from the student file from the Add/Find option.

Q: I am part of a co-op, so when I signed up I chose that co-op. It has no schools associated with it. I am now a member of each district's community as well as each individual school's community. Is this acceptable?

A: LC does not recognize co-ops. Once you joined at least one school in each corporation you needed access to, the local LC administration should have given you ISTAR corporation level access then you would not have had to join every school community.

Q: Is there a way to access a list of all students who took ISTAR last year, or do we have to go in and find each student?

A: There is no way currently in the system to check who was assessed in ISTAR last year. A list of STN's was sent to superintendents for AYP last fall.

Q: Last year ISTAR7 helped generate a list of students taking ISTAR. How do we check to make sure all students taking ISTAR are assigned to a case manager? With students moving to different schools this information has the potential of being missed.

A: This is a local responsibility. I would first recommend that you have your teachers open an assessment on all students in their class who have ISTAR in lieu of ISTEP+ listed in the current IEP so that you will see all these students on your Compliance Report.

Q: At times, even though a student has been assigned to a teacher, the teacher is not able to open an assessment. The program states that only a case manager can open an assessment. Then I must reassign the student to me and then delete and reassign back to the teacher. Is there a work around for this?

A: This is an issue for some accounts due to the migration of data last fall. If this happens, have the case manager remove the student from their list and then you can assign the student to that case manager again instead of having to assign then to yourself first.

Assessment questions:

Q: Can only case managers print individual assessment reports?

A: No, Individual Summary reports can be viewed/printed from the ISTAR reports option. Administrators can also view/print the finalized Summary report from the student file from the Add/Find option.

Q: What "harm" would come if the teacher did assess a student on their caseload PRIOR to the 'real' assessment window?

A: The case manager will need to finalize this assessment and create and finalize a new one. Only data from assessments created and finalized in the assessment window (March 1 – April 30, 2011) will be pulled for state reporting.

Q: When there is more than one assessor, does the case manager have to complete it first?

A: Only the case manager can create and finalize an assessment. Once it has been created any other user who has access to the student can add assessment ratings.

Q: Now that the Progress Monitoring is outside of the ISTAR Assessment would it be alright to have an open Progress Monitoring when the Alternate Assessment window closes?

A: Yes, as long as there is a finalized assessment on the student before April 30th. Progress monitoring can be used any time.

Q: At the high school level, the only grades required to be assessed are grades 9 and 10 (barring a case conference committee determination otherwise)...correct?

A: It is the expectation of the Office of Student Assessment that ISTAR is completed yearly for grade 3-10, but only grade 3-8 and 10 ISTAR data is used for state reporting and are required.

Q: You mentioned that teachers could attach files. Where is this function located?

A: There is an attachment option on the Assessment map page and on each performance row. Please refer to the Teacher step by steps found under the Files and Bookmarks tab.

Q: When I add a student only admin are in the drop down box for case load manager

A: This could be due to several reasons. Make sure your teachers/staff have LC accounts at the school(s) they need access to. Then make sure that your local LC administrator gave them ISTAR access.

Q: Did you say that a supplemental assessment is an option for grades 11+?

A: A teachers can assess students in grades 2, 11 and 12 on the ISTAR Alternate Assessment for local purposes. The only purpose option available for students in these grades is "ISTAR as a potential tool".

Q: It isn't asking whether it is ISTAR for Independent Functioning or ISTAR for Academic Competence...why not?

A: A new document was written to combine AC and IF criteria. Please look for an update from the Office of Special Education soon.

Q: What about students that are being assessed for independent functioning- will the academic part still be required?

A: The required assessment areas for ISTAR are the academic areas. (See below). All other areas are optional and can be used for local purposes.

Q: On the Assessing at Grade Level Box can we choose the appropriate level for the student? Example: have an 8th grade student functioning at 2nd grade level, will the program let you choose 2nd grade for that box?

A: *The Assessing at Grade Level Box should not be changed. It should be kept at the grade level reflected in STN. The purpose of the Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR) program is to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science (grades 4.6 and 10) , and Social Studies (grades 5 and 7) based on alternate academic achievement standards. The performance threads comprised of progressive skills based on alternate academic achievement standards that are appropriate to the student's achievement level.*

Q: Since teachers are not required to assess the Life Skills/Employability skills of their students, could they finalize the academic areas, then reopen an assessment and begin assessing Life Skills/Employability skills? If yes, can that assessment be open during the assessment window or must it too be finalized prior to April 30?

A: *The academic areas are required whenever a case manager selects ISTAR in lieu of ISTEP+ for the purpose. If they also select Life Skills/Employability skills these must all be completed before the user is able to finalize the assessment. If a case manager creates a second assessment prior to April 30th the student will be moved back to the incomplete section of the Compliance Report until this new assessment is either finished and finalized or deleted.*

Q: If an 11th or 12th grader has never been assessed in Biology, should the case manager go ahead and assess those students?

A: *10th grade is the only grade where Biology is available.*

MISC:

Q: How many teachers can work in Sandbox at one time?

A: *I do not believe there is a limit. There is a log in for an elementary, middle school and high school teacher. Make sure that each user selects a different student to work on.*

Q: Would the audit be for only the current year or previous years as well?

A: *I mentioned that an audit may be conducted in the near future. Protocol would be defined by the the Office of Student Assessment.*

Q: Also, do you have a guide/chart to assist teachers in determining the Standard Deviation (create assessment). Most of my teachers will have difficulty with this.

A: *Historically, a Standard deviation is 15 points above or below average (100).*

ISTAR-Alternate Assessment Required Areas:

Grade Band Assessment 3-5

- *Grade 3 – Math and Language Arts*
- *Grade 4 – Math, Language Arts and Science*
- *Grade 5 – Math, Language Arts and Social Studies*

Grade Band Assessment 6-8

- *Grade 6 – Math, Language Arts and Science*
- *Grade 7 – Math, Language Arts and Social Studies*
- *Grade 8 – Math and Language Arts*

Grade Band Assessment 9-10

- *Grade 9 - Math and Language Arts*
- *Grade 10 – Math and Language Arts and Biology*